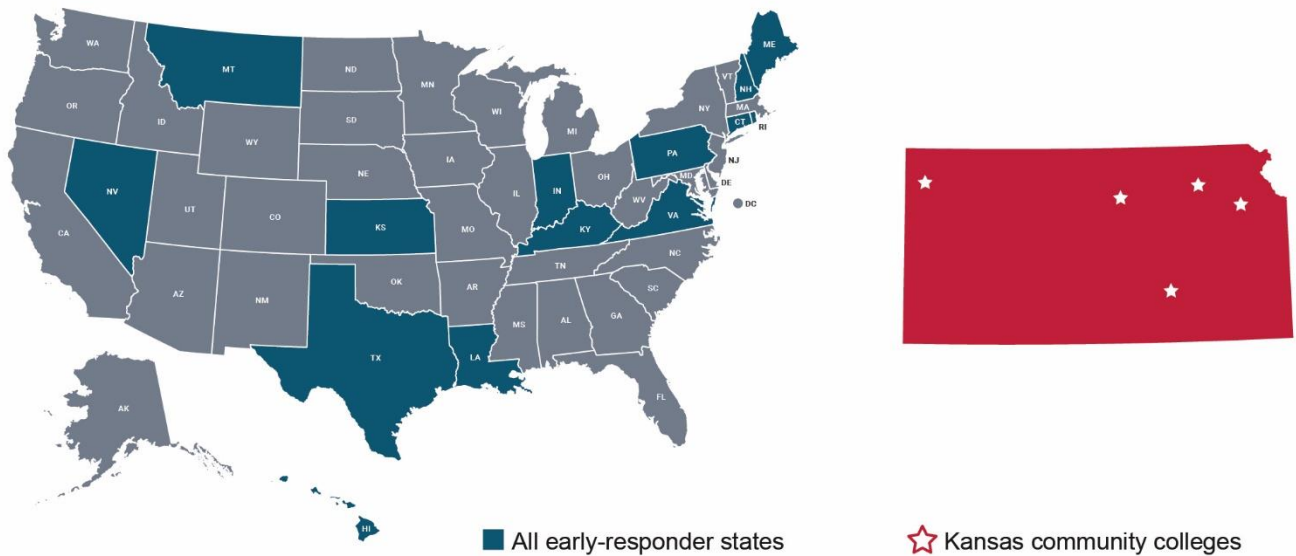


# COMMUNITY COLLEGE WORKFORCE EDUCATION STUDY

In late 2020, Kansas technical colleges participated in a national study of community and technical college workforce education. Kansas was one of 14 states where education authorities volunteered to encourage colleges to respond early enough in 2020 to receive preliminary statewide results in January 2021. This brief compares Kansas to the 14 states in this early-responder group.

The goal of the study: to explore the innovation under way at community and technical colleges across the US and highlight what these institutions are doing to put Americans to work as the nation recovers from the Covid-19 pandemic.

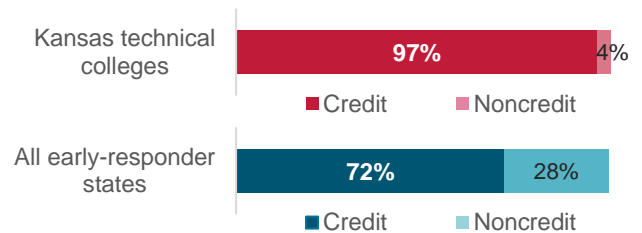
## Early responders



### Credit and noncredit enrollment

Community and technical colleges report abundant information about students enrolled in credit-eligible programs. Much less is known about learners enrolled in institutions’ noncredit divisions. This study begins to address that gap, with a special focus on two-year colleges’ noncredit workforce education programs and relationships with employers.

### Percentage of students in credit & noncredit programs



In 2019, 97 percent of Kansas technical college students were enrolled in credit-eligible programs; 4 percent were enrolled in noncredit programs. This is a significantly smaller share than the average across all early-responder states, where 28 percent of students were enrolled in noncredit programs.

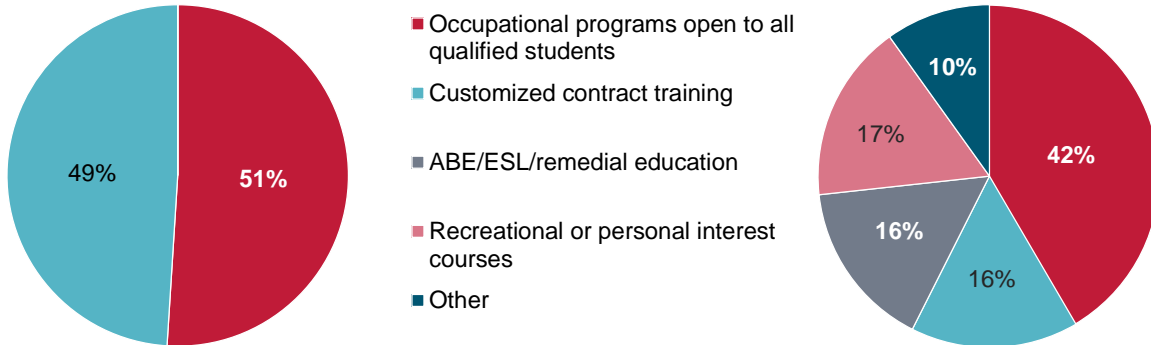
## Noncredit programs

Noncredit programs may include customized contract training provided for specific employers, occupational education programs open to all qualified students, remedial education, English as a second language and personal interest courses, among other types of instruction.

In 2019, 51 percent of Kansas technical college noncredit students were enrolled in occupational programs open to all qualified students – a larger share than the average in all early-responder states.

**Kansas technical colleges**

**All early-responder states**

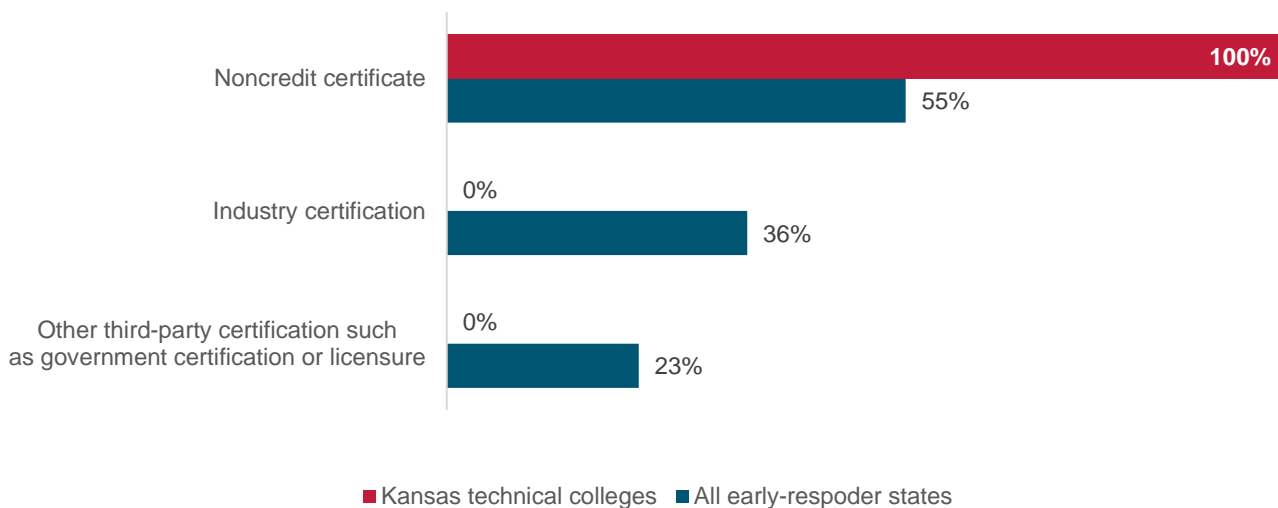


## Noncredit workforce education

### Credentials earned in noncredit occupational education programs

Students who complete noncredit workforce programs generally earn a credential of some kind, sometimes several credentials. Kansas technical colleges reported that no students who completed noncredit workforce programs earned industry certifications – significantly fewer than the average in all early responder states.

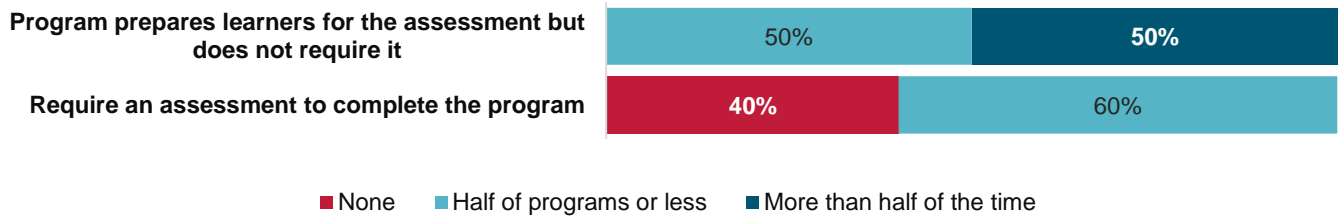
**Percentage of program completers who earned credentials**



## Embedding industry certifications

Unlike traditional academic credentials, which signal that students have attended and completed a course of study, industry certifications signal what learners know and what job-related tasks they can perform – occupation-specific knowledge and skills measured by tests developed by industry groups.

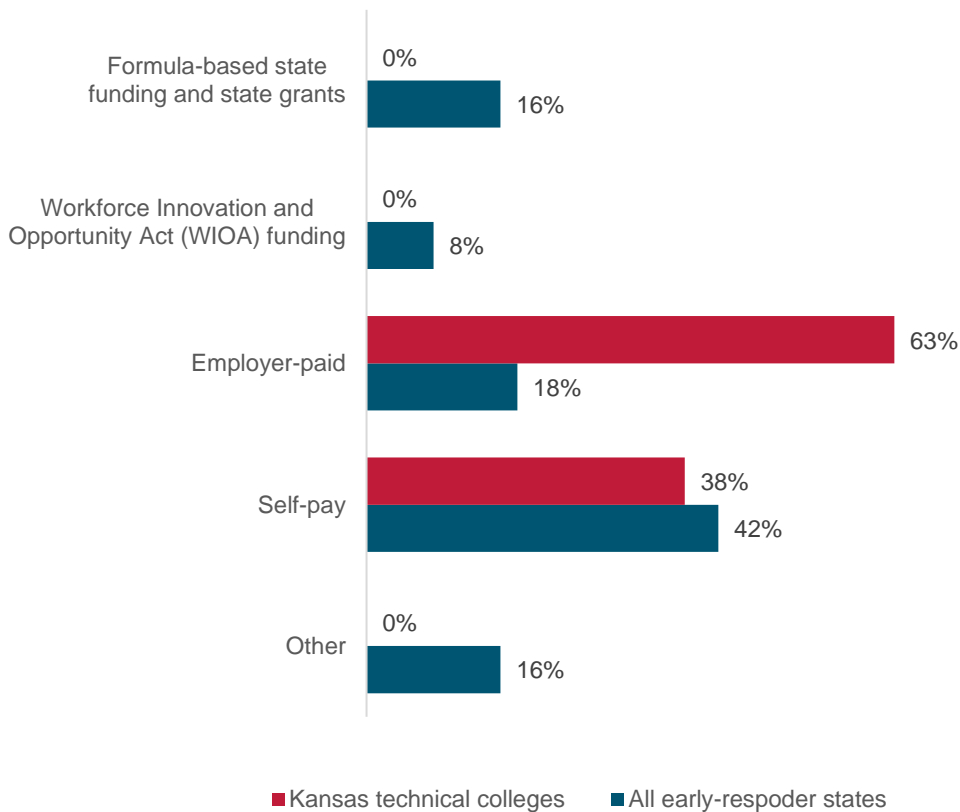
### Percentage of Kansas technical colleges that embed certifications in credit programs



## Funding

Kansas technical colleges look to a variety of sources to provide funding for noncredit occupational education, with 63 percent coming from employers covering the cost of tuition and 38 percent from students paying out of pocket.

### Funding sources



## Quality assurance

Community and technical colleges use a variety of tools to ensure the quality of noncredit occupational education. Kansas technical colleges rely on regional labor market information and local employer input to design and revise programs.

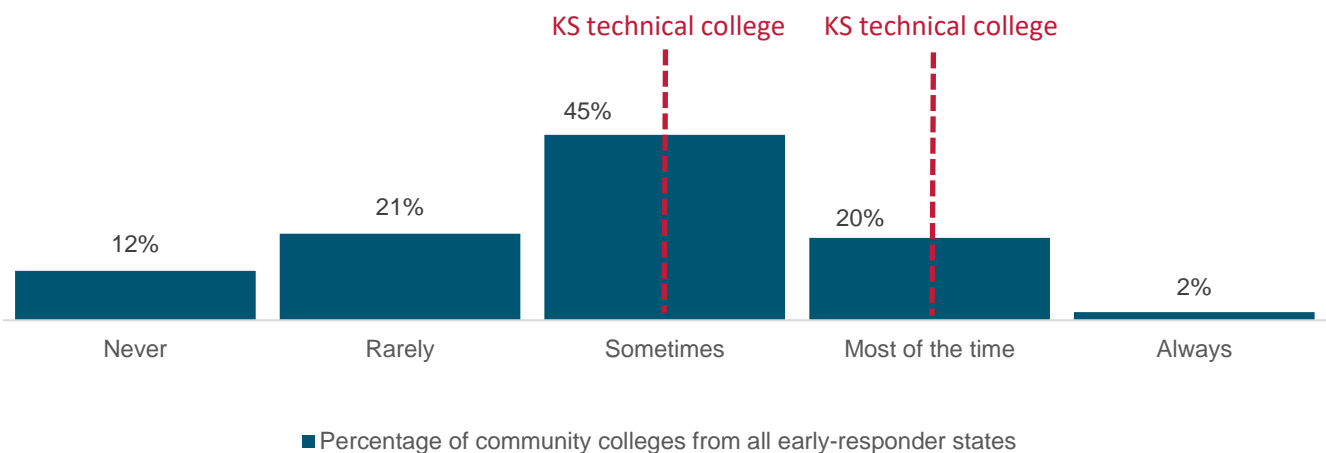
### How community and technical colleges ensure the quality of noncredit programs

Quality assurance	Do Kansas technical colleges do this?	Percent of community colleges from early-responder states that do this
Programs are designed or revised regularly based on labor market information from employers	✓	96%
Students earn industry certifications or licensure	✗	91%
Programs meet WIOA or Perkins standards or are approved by the state workforce board	✗	64%
Institution tracks post-completion employment outcomes	✗	25%

## Leveraging noncredit learning for college credit

Two of five Kansas technical colleges responded to the survey question asking whether noncredit students who later enroll in credit-eligible programs can leverage most or all of what they learned in a noncredit program for college credit. One institution said this occurred 'sometimes'; a second reported 'most of the time.'

### Colleges where noncredit occupational students who later enroll in credit-eligible programs can leverage what they learned for college credit



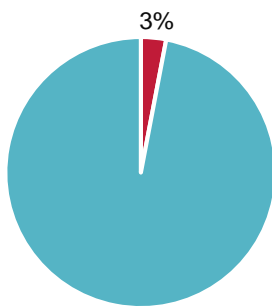
## Demographics

Many community and technical colleges do not track demographic data for noncredit workforce students. Kansas technical colleges keep no data on the race and ethnicity of noncredit workforce students. Across all 14 early-responder states, information of this kind is available for 68 percent of the noncredit workforce student body.

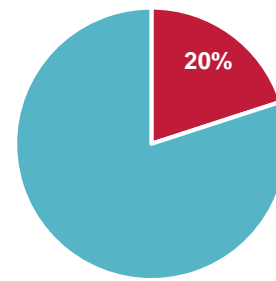
## Employer engagement

Employers collaborate with community and technical colleges in a wide variety of ways, from offering occasional labor market advice to partnering actively to design and provide instruction.

### Employers offering customized contract training



### Employers offering work-based learning, including internships, apprenticeships and co-ops



Percentage of employer partners at Kansas technical colleges

## More about this study

Seven Kansas technical colleges were invited to participate in this study in October 2020, and five responded by December 10, 2020, for a 71 percent response rate. This brief reflects the responses provided by participating colleges only and may not be representative of all community and technical colleges in the state.

Kansas data were compared with data from 127 community colleges in 14 early responder states.

All questions in the study asked about fiscal year 2019. Participating colleges could pass over questions they were unable to answer; missing responses were excluded from calculated percentages.

As postsecondary workforce education evolves, so does the language used to describe it, and different educators in different states often use different terminology. The language used in this study represents an effort to find common ground but may not conform exactly with the terminology used in every state.

The survey is still being administered in some parts of the country and is still open to Kansas colleges that have not yet responded.



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